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REMARKS

The statement in the outstanding Office Action that claims 23-32, 35, and 36 are allowed is appreciated. Because claims 23-32, 35, and 36 are the only claims pending in this application, it is believed that this application is in condition for allowance.

The outstanding Office Action includes several prior art-based rejections. Claims 1-3, 5-8, 10, 13, and 15-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent Publication No. US 2002/0112743 to Tabani et al. and U.S. Patent Publication No. US 2004/0007255 to Labib et al. Claim 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Tabani et al., Labib et al., and U.S. Patent Publication No. US 2001/0047962 to Zha et al. Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Tabani et al., Labib et al., and U.S. Patent No. 5,643,455 to Kopp et al. Claims 11 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Tabani et al., Labib et al., and U.S. Patent Publication No. US 2003/0047510 to Baldridge et al. Claim 14 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Tabani et al., Labib et al., and Cheryan, Ultrafiltration Handbook, 1986, Technomic Publishing, pages 193-194, 235.

In view of the cancellation of claims 1-22, it is understood that these prior art-based rejections have been rendered moot. Accordingly, withdrawal of these prior art-based rejections is requested.

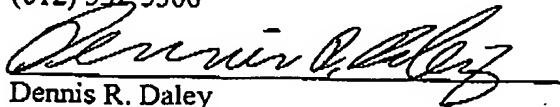
It is pointed out that the applicants reserve the right to pursue claims 1-22 in a continuing patent application.

It is believed that this application is in condition for allowance. Early notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903
(612) 332-5300

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Dennis R. Daley
Reg. No. 34,994
DDaley:jm

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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE